

CHAPTER IV

PLAN MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORTING PROGRAMS

Four programs can help support the success of Hickman's Action Plan. These programs are:

1. Capital Improvements Financing--an annual, predictable investment plan that typically uses a six-year planning horizon to schedule and fund projects integral to the plan's action agenda.
2. Zoning Regulations--updated land use districts can allow the community to provide direction for future growth.
3. Subdivision Regulations--establish criteria for dividing land into building areas, utility easements, and streets. Implementing the Transportation Plan is a primary function of subdivision regulations.
4. Plan Maintenance --a yearly and five year review program will allow the community flexibility in responding to growth and a continuous program of maintaining the plan's viability.

Annual Review of the Plan

A relevant, up to date plan is critical to the on-going planning success. To maintain both public and private sector confidence; evaluate the effectiveness of planning activities; and, most importantly, make mid-plan corrections on the use of city resources, the plan must be current.

After adoption of the comprehensive plan, opportunities should be provided to identify any changes in conditions that would impact elements or policies of the plan. Each year a report should be prepared by the Planning Commission which provides information and recommendations on 1) whether the plan is current in respect to population and economic changes; and 2) are the recommended policies still valid for the city and its long term growth.

The Planning Commission should hold a public hearing on this report in order to:

1. Provide citizens or developers with an opportunity to present possible changes to the plan;
2. Identify any changes in the status of projects called for in the plan; and
3. Bring forth any issues, or identify any changes in conditions which may impact the validity of the plan.

If the Commission finds that major policy issues or major changes in basic assumptions or conditions have arisen which could necessitate revisions to the plan, they should report to the city council changes or further study of those changes. This process may lead to identification of amendments to the plan which would be processed according to the procedures in the next section.

Plan Amendment Procedures

It is anticipated that each year, during the annual plan review, individuals and groups may come forward with proposals to amend the plan. We would recommend that those proposals be compiled and reviewed once a year. By reviewing all proposed amendments at one time, the effects of each proposal can be evaluated for impacts on other proposals and all proposals can be reviewed for their net impact on the comprehensive plan.

If major new, innovative development opportunities arise which impact several elements of the plan and which are determined to be of importance, a plan amendment may be proposed and considered separate from the annual review of other proposed plan amendments. City Staff could compile a list of proposed amendments received during a year, prepare an outline providing information on each proposal. The Planning Commission could then prepare recommendations to be submitted to the City Council. The comprehensive plan amendment process should adhere to the adoption process specified by Nebraska law and should provide for organized participation and involvement of interested citizens.

Methods for Evaluating Development Proposals

Interpreting how the plan relates to zoning requests should not be based on single, isolated sentences. Rather, the interpretation of the plan should be composed of a complete review, with references to the goals and policies, the overall land use plan, and specific land use policies. Moreover, when considering specific proposed developments, interpretation of the plan should include a thorough review of all sections of the plan.

If a development proposal is not supported by the plan, serious consideration should be given to making modifications to the proposal. The following criteria should be used to determine if a comprehensive plan amendment would be justified:

- the character of the adjacent neighborhood
- the zoning and uses on nearby properties
- the suitability of the property for the uses allowed under the current zoning designation
- the type and extent of positive or detrimental impact that may affect adjacent properties, or the community at large, if the request is approved.
- the impact of the proposal on public utilities and facilities
- the length of time that the subject and adjacent properties have been utilized for their current uses
- the benefits of the proposal to the public health, safety, and welfare compared to the hardship imposed on the applicant if the request is not approved

- comparison between the existing land use plan and the proposed change regarding the relative conformance to the goals and policies
- consideration of professional staff recommendations

Plan Update

The next comprehensive plan update should be initiated after the current plan has been in use for five years. The update process could include forecasts to a new target year analysis of alternate land use plans, and possible evaluation of alternate formats for the plan. The annual review of the plan, specified above, will accommodate any necessary revisions to the plan which may arise during the years prior to the next update.